

Transit Station Areas (TSAs)

Proposed Text Amendments to the Minneapolis Plan

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

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Amending

Chapter 4, Marketplaces: Neighborhoods

(To be repeated as Policies 9.36-9.39 in Chapter 9, City Form)

Transit Station Areas (TSA)

Transit Station Area (TSA) is a land use policy feature arising from regional investment in dedicated, fixed-route transit lines (e.g., LRT, commuter rail, busway). The purpose of identifying TSAs as a land use feature in the *Minneapolis Plan* is to emphasize that station areas represent unique opportunities and challenges that require special policy consideration. As such, TSAs call for tools that maximize potential community development benefits of transit while also strengthening and protecting the surrounding neighborhoods.

Dedicated, fixed-route transit service represents increased levels of accessibility for downtown Minneapolis and the neighborhoods that are served. This increased level of accessibility will attract investment. Areas nearest the station may be most appropriate for uses that maximize the benefits of transit, such as multi-family housing, high employment work places, and other uses with high pedestrian traffic (e.g., schools, entertainment, and retail services). These new opportunities must relate well to existing neighborhoods and build upon their strengths.

The City will engage in activities that foster transit ridership. This will include redevelopment as well as regulations that prevent the introduction or expansion of uses that do not support transit (e.g., automobile repair services or low-density industrial uses). Public infrastructure and design standards should result in a high quality environment that is pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and which generates vital urban areas. Success of these efforts will be measured by the extent to which development supports the overall well being of the City, the neighborhoods surrounding the stations, and the transit system.

The City acknowledges its essential role in ensuring that critical public components of TSAs are realized. To achieve these public components, the City may need to acquire land and build or modify public infrastructure. The City further acknowledges that successful implementation will depend on partnerships with other units of government, neighborhood organizations, the not-for-profit sector, and the private sector.

Hiawatha LRT

The Hiawatha LRT line connects Minneapolis neighborhoods with downtown Minneapolis, the airport and the Mall of America. Six LRT stations along Hiawatha Avenue serve Minneapolis neighborhoods. Although the VA Medical Center does not fall within the City limits, portions of the station area do. The areas around each of these stations are designated as TSAs.

Downtown Minneapolis is home to four stations along 5th Street. An extension of Hiawatha LRT will be built and a fifth station constructed near 5th Avenue North to connect with the future Northstar commuter rail line. The downtown station areas are described in, and policies for them are detailed in, the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*. (In general, *The Minneapolis Plan* provides policy and direction for downtown Minneapolis through the

Downtown 2010 Plan, which, as a stand-alone document, is included in its entirety in *The Minneapolis Plan*.)

Designated Transit Station Areas (TSAs)
Hiawatha LRT
• Cedar/Riverside
• Franklin Avenue
• Lake Street/Midtown
• 38 th Street
• 46 th Street
• 50 th Street/Minnehaha Park
• VA Medical Center

Characteristics of TSAs

Transit Station Areas (TSAs) are designated on the Land Use Policy Map. The Minneapolis Plan does not delineate the precise geographic extent of these policy areas. The following general characteristics should be used to guide policy application and implementation steps in these areas:

- TSAs will be the subject of established master plans that identify and/or prioritize areas for change (and preservation), as well as specific goals and objectives for redevelopment, public infrastructure, density and urban design.
- TSAs are areas approximately one-half mile in radius from transit stations, reflecting an understanding that most walking trips to and from transit stations are ten minutes or less in duration. Density, urban design, and public infrastructure is, therefore, especially critical in these areas. The actual size of this area is influenced by directness of routes, physical barriers, and the potential for those barriers to be bridged.
- Potential TSA densities and/or redevelopment opportunities are generally highest within 1/4 mile of the transit station, but are also dependent upon factors such as existing neighborhood character and land cost and availability.
- TSA development is designed with the pedestrian, bicyclist, and/or transit user in mind.
- TSA development serves individuals who are more likely to use transit (e.g., residents of multi-family housing and office and retail workers)
- TSA development includes small-scale retail services that are neighborhood in scale and from which pedestrians, bicyclists, and/or transit riders are likely to benefit (e.g., coffee shop, day care, dry cleaners, small-scale grocery, flower shop)

4.18 Minneapolis will encourage both a density and mix of land uses in TSAs that both support ridership for transit as well as benefit from its users.


Implementation Steps

Explore and pursue opportunities to integrate development with transit stations.

Concentrate highest densities and mixed-use development nearest the transit station and/or along Commercial

Corridors, Community Corridors and/or streets served by local bus transit.

Ensure that new development density is well integrated with existing neighborhood character through transitions in scale and attention to design.

Support the development of new housing types in the TSA, including townhomes, mansion apartments, garden apartments, granny flats/carriage houses, and multi-family residential buildings 

Support and encourage small-scale, pedestrian-oriented services and retail uses to locate near stations and within mixed-use buildings to serve transit riders and the immediate neighborhood (e.g., day care centers, cafés, dry cleaners, convenience grocery, etc.).

Recruit land uses that value convenient access to downtown Minneapolis or other institutional or employment centers that are well served by transit.

Discourage automobile services and drive-through facilities from locating or expanding in these designated areas.

4.19 Minneapolis will require design standards for TSAs that are oriented to the pedestrian and bicyclist and that enforce traditional urban form.

Implementation Steps

Ensure that TSA building and site design is oriented to the pedestrian (e.g., reinforcing street walls, anchoring street corners, creating semi-public outdoor spaces, creating visual interest, providing adequate fenestration, and ensuring that principal building entrances open onto public sidewalks).

Preserve traditional urban form where it currently exists within TSAs, and encourage new development to relate to this context. (See description of traditional urban form in *Chapter 9, City Form*)

Work in partnership with neighborhoods and businesses to enhance the safety and aesthetics of TSA streets and sidewalks through installation of streetscape elements (e.g., lighting, trees, and street furniture).

Ensure that new development and renovation of existing structures adhere to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) (See description of building form and context in *Chapter 9, City Form*.)

Ensure that TSA development is well integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods through attention to building design, landscaping, and transitions in density and land use.

4.20 Minneapolis will provide direct connections to transit stations for pedestrians, bicyclists, and bus riders.

Implementation Steps

Design streets, sidewalks, and other public infrastructure to prioritize pedestrian, bus and bicycle access to transit stations (e.g., create wider sidewalks; construct pedestrian

bridges, tunnels, and plazas; add bicycle lanes and parking; create bus lanes, pull-outs, and waiting facilities.)

Work with transit service providers to ensure that bus connections to transit stations are safe, attractive and easy to use (e.g., establish appropriate signage and waiting facilities on important connecting local bus routes)

Enhance pedestrian connections to stations where walking environments are unsafe or uninviting (e.g., buffering pedestrians from traffic, reducing intersection crossing distances, installing traffic control devices, limiting the size and number of curb cuts, improving streetscapes including lighting and landscaping, installing public art, etc.)

Mitigate physical barriers that prevent easy access for pedestrians to the stations (e.g., bridging highways or high-volume roadways, creating safe pedestrian underpasses, acquiring new public rights-of-way and passages, etc.)

Enhance pedestrian connections and wayfinding from neighborhoods with high concentrations of transit users.

Work in partnership with neighborhoods and businesses to ensure that primary pedestrian and bicycle routes are well maintained, free of obstacles, and cleared of snow and litter.

Establish working relationships with institutions, large employers, and/or landowners to encourage transit use and improve wayfinding to/from transit.

4.21 Minneapolis recognizes that parking is a necessary part of the urban environment, but will limit the amount, location, and design of parking in TSAs in order to encourage and support walking, bicycling, and transit use.

Implementation Steps

Establish upper limits on the amount of off-street parking so that walking, bicycling and transit use are not discouraged.

Allow reductions in minimum off-street parking requirements.

Support shared use of parking by commercial uses with different peak periods of parking demand.

Restrict the location of off-street parking for new development to the side or rear of buildings, so that there are direct connections between the public sidewalk and the principal entrances of buildings.

Limit the amount of street frontage for new off-street parking lots and require landscaping between parking lots and public sidewalks.

Provide density bonuses for land uses that provide parking underground or within structures.

Use parking meters and other parking management practices to ensure an adequate supply and turnover of on-street parking for commercial activities.

Discourage long-term on-street parking by non-residents.

Work in partnership with the Metropolitan Council to evaluate and address the impact of automobile traffic and parking generated by the presence of transit stations.

Limit parking facilities in neighborhoods that are exclusively for the use of transit riders.

Work in partnership with other entities to identify opportunities for shared parking facilities to strategically support the development within TSAs.

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